

LETTERS

Dear Tribal Members,

I have repeatedly voiced my support for the STEDCO concept. In creating STEDCO, the Tribal Council intended it to be an autonomous entity. On-site reviews of the business entities of other tribes drove home the importance of limiting political influence on business decisions. In cases where this limitation was absent, businesses tended to fail. The initial 1985 STEDCO Charter strove to create this balance of authority. Since then, the charter has been amended several times to increase Tribal Council's role in STEDCO and the management has turned over several times.

Today, there is a lot of criticism of STEDCO. If STEDCO were truly the autonomous entity that was originally intended, then this criticism would be wholly deserved. The facts are that many decisions made by STEDCO were done at the request of Tribal Council and did not always serve the business goals of STEDCO.

The most compelling examples are the purchases of various lands. STEDCO has purchased various properties and then created plans for business development. At Council request, these lands were transferred back to the Tribe for various projects--for construction of the tribal clinic, for construction of the new administration building, and for construction of tribal housing. All of these purposes served to benefit tribal members, as well as the non-tribal users of the clinic. But, they did not truly serve the business goals of STEDCO. In making the transfers, the Tribe wrote off the original cost of land purchase against STEDCO indebtedness (loans and taxes). In a private market environment, STEDCO would have implemented business plans on these properties, retained an interest in the properties, or at least realized a re-sale profit at current property values.

When Phil Rilatos, the newest STEDCO Director, came on board he faced a 4.2 million dollar debt. Through land transfers and cash, STEDCO paid that money back. At that time the mill was costing about \$100,000 dollars a month to run. Phil

succeeded in finding a venture partner who considered the mill a business with profit potential. At this point, the mill is generating a monthly profit of about \$40,000. STEDCO splits profits with the venture partner, using it's share to retire prior debts. Phil projects that by February or March 1997, these profits will become positive revenue for STEDCO.

I will not dispute that there have also been unsuccessful business ventures. My point is that in terms of accomplishing Tribal Council goals, STEDCO has been an essential, willing and successful partner. Before we hold STEDCO responsible for it's role, we need to be clear about exactly what that is and give it the autonomy and authority necessary to implement it's mission.

Respectfully Yours
Bonnie M. Petersen

TO THE TRIBAL MEMBERSHIP:

Some of you have been growling that the General Council needs more say in what the Tribal Council does as business. The first thing that General Council has a say about is who is elected to the Tribal Council. It then becomes your responsibility to let Tribal Council people know what your concerns are about.

An example of this happened a couple of meetings ago. A group of people requested to use the Community Center. The Tribal Council voted to refuse the request for the wrong reasons. I voted no because the reason was wrong. General Council member Ed Ben wrote a letter to the Tribal Chair. The issue was brought up again and the issue was resolved in a proper manner.

Chairman Delores Pigsley brings up the General Council concerns at Tribal Council meetings, as do others of us on the Council. Some of the issues may have to be dealt with by Tribal administration or Chinook Winds or even Tribal Court. Some may be resolved and some may not be resolved.

As a Tribal Council member I have to look at an issue and see if it is personal or Tribal and where it can best be solved.

I also have a backup because I know that if General

Council feels that a decision by Tribal Council was not right, we will hear about it.

Because the size of Tribal Government has grown and people are involved, mistakes are always possible and do happen, so I urge you, the tribal members, our General Council, to keep your eyes on us, the Tribal Council, so that we keep mistakes to a minimum.

Thank You,
Bensell Breon

Dear Tribal Members,

This is an ongoing series to address the judicial inequities in the now fourteen year old case of State vs Alan T. Kentta.

My primary endeavor is to challenge readers to investigate the truth of my words. And that once you have satisfactory done so, that you embrace this truth, submit to your compassion and express your support and concerns to the Oregon Board of Parole, 2575 center ST. NE Salem, OR 97310.

Because of time limitations I am forced to drastically condense the facts. In part one (Oct. 96 Issue) I gave a criminal history of the victim Charles Hein.

This is crucial because of his notoriety as a multiple convicted killer was one the central issues during trial. Furthermore, because of his viscous criminal background the original parole board set a parole date as low as the law legally allowed.

A very crucial and consistent factor in this case is the unanimous sentiment and empathy offered to me by each and every element in the judicial process:

(1)within weeks of my conviction the jury foreperson, an elderly woman, made a point to tell my attorney, "I'm sorry we had to find that boy guilty, but someone ought to give that boy a medal."

(2)The sentencing court imposed a 15 year minimum which basically had no impact on the overall sentence as the matrix grid for me was 13 to 16 years. And the court was well aware of this!

(3)Even the prosecuting attorney came to my cell after

sentencing and told me "don't worry the minimum is not going to stand and I want you know this was a difficult case to prosecute and for what it's worth I was as surprised as you were when they came back with a guilty verdict. good luck Allan and I mean that."

(4) The parole board unanimously overrode the 15 year minimum and set me at thirteen years, the lowest they could legally set me. They explained to me how they could understand how this could of happened, they didn't condone my actions, nor did they have the authority to overturn the sentence. They went on to state that they were forced by law to release Chuck Hein even though they knew he was extremely dangerous. They were afraid something like this was going to happen. Sadly it did.

In summation they all offered empathy.

Lastly, on a warm summer evening recently past, myself accompanied by my fiancée trekked up to the scene of the incident on little Euchre Mountain to finally offer prayers to the deceased. A body would have to harbor 13 1/2 years of remorse & regret to make such a journey, wouldn't you think?

Alan T. Kentta

Letters to the Editor :

All letters received will be printed except those which are determined to be slanderous. Please type or write legible, no profane language will be printed. The Siletz Newsletter and Tribal Government accept no responsibility for statements made in the letters to the editor. The opinions expressed are souly those of individuals writing in. **LETTERS THAT EXCEED 450 WORDS IN LENGTH WILL BE EDITED as approved by Tribal Council Resolution #96-142. All letters must include your name, address and signature.** Send letters to : Siletz News, P.O. Box 549, Siletz, Oregon 97380. Attn: Teresa Miller, Managing Editor. **PLEASE NOTE:** The Chief Executive Officer of the Siletz Tribe is the Chief Editor of the Siletz Newsletter.